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WWD Honors

Those being recognized at the WWD Honors gala in October include Sarah Burton, Willy Chavarría and Ralph Lauren's Patrice Louvet.

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Big in Paris

RH has opened a seven-level, mega flagship in the French capital, complete with a rare book room, restaurant and bar.

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Women In Power

WWD + FN + Beauty Inc reveal their annual list of female leaders impacting the industry, plus updated data on female representation.

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Per Giorgio

Designers, industry figures, celebrities and athletes turned out to pay their last respects to Giorgio Armani in Milan over the weekend. But what was even more touching was the thousands of everyday people, like those seen here, who queued for hours to spend a few minutes in front of his casket in his Teatro in Via Bergognone to acknowledge the enormous impact of the man universally known as "the Maestro." *For more, see pages 4 to 7.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY DARIA KOLOMEYTSOVA



CEO Talks

Gary Friedman Talks Opening Of RH Paris

- The American furniture and interior design business opens RH Paris, the Gallery on the Champs-Élysées just in time for Paris Design Week.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL FOGIEL

On the eve of opening of RH's first Paris gallery, Gary Friedman issued a heartfelt message to the city and its people. "In Paris, the measure is eternity and we have built accordingly," a video message read, with images of the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame the Arc de Triomphe floating by with emotional music in the background.

On Friday, the Corte Madera, Calif.-based furniture and interior design firm officially opened the gilded gold leaf gates of its latest jewel, RH Paris, the Gallery on the Champs-Élysées: A New hub for Architecture, Design, Food and Wine.

Since taking over RH in 2001, then a trusted U.S.-based furniture business, Friedman has worked to transform it into a luxury experience. Everything, he said, has been leading up to this moment. Friedman slept three hours the night before, in preparation for the unveiling of his biggest feat yet.

"It's the most dominant country for luxury brands, the most dominant, influential country from a culinary point of view and its impacts. It is the place where you come to do your best work," he told WWD in an interview, highlighting

RH's luxury positioning and the store's proximity to the pillars of the European luxury market.

Located just off the Avenue Montaigne, the building was finished in 1983 and was once the flagship location of Abercrombie & Fitch.

"It was always our vision to open [in Europe] with Paris. And the logic behind that is based on a quote from Bernard Arnault, when he was asked, 'how do you build a great brand in China?' And his answer was, you build great stores in Paris, London and New York. And so we're doing it in a bit of a different order," he said, noting that the New York City gallery was opened first. The six-level, 90,000-square-foot RH Gallery, at 9 Ninth Avenue in Manhattan's Meatpacking District with its rooftop restaurant with views downtown to the Freedom Tower, set the tone when it opened in 2018.

The Paris opening is a milestone for the company, historically and architecturally. The structure itself is majestic. A freestanding building on three sides, visitors follow a crushed limestone path to a secret garden where ivy-covered walls and sculpted trees frame the six-meter cast medallion bronze doors marking the entrance to the Parisian store of what has become one of the largest residential design firms in the world. Inside, walls are adorned with inlaid brass and white onyx mosaic, framing a three-dimensional image of Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man, which is present in many RH Galleries and

represents the RH design ethos.

Vitruvius, a Roman architect and engineer whose work from the first century BC is said to have inspired da Vinci's drawing of the "Vitruvian Man" 1,500 years later and has been a guiding inspiration for Friedman along his own path.

"Our design principles and ethos go all the way back to the teachings of Vitruvius. We believe that the most pleasing design is a reflection of human design, a study of balance, symmetry and human proportions. And he believed that beauty is produced by pleasing appearance and good taste, with everything integrated. And so everything that we do, we think of the need to integrate things seamlessly so it's one thing," he mused.

When asked how RH will fit into the Parisian design community, brimming with interior design studios and signature flair, he's confident, as one of the biggest one-stop interior design businesses in the world with everything from landscape architecture to bathrooms under its umbrella, that the brand has a lot to offer. RH may not have the European flair Paris does, but it's able to undertake residential projects like no other businesses. It was also no mistake that RH decided to open

the space during Paris Design Week, which started Thursday and will run until Sept. 13.

"I think the biggest advantage we have from an interior design point of view is that most interior design businesses are not consumer-facing. There aren't really storefronts for interior designers on streets that people see. We've got an incredible physical platform that we're building. And that physical platform is based in great architecture, great interior design and great landscape architecture. We have a physical manifestation of what we do. And most interior designers don't have that," he said, adding that the RH Paris Gallery invites the design community to explore the RH world.

"It's probably the largest assortment of product at our quality level in the world. And it's not just sofas or not just lighting," he continued.

A coffee table by French architect and designer Thierry Lemaire has been added to the array of furnishings that includes everything from bathware to garden pieces. RH's roster of designers includes Sydney's Nicholas and Harrison Condos, Los Angeles-based designer Ann Marie Vering and Spanish designer Mario Ruiz.

As a museum-like space brimming with rare works, the gallery has a lot to offer the design-curious. Inside the Architecture and Design Bibliotheca, guests are privy to rare books by cultural masters, including Vitruvius, da Vinci, Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio, French architect and writer Philibert de l'Orme, French philosopher Maurice Blondel and French administrator Georges-Eugène Haussmann, who was responsible for Paris' modern urban transformation. At the center of the library lies one of the first modern printings of "De Architectura, the Ten Books on Architecture" by Vitruvius, which was produced around 1521.

The Gallery, spanning seven levels, is connected by a soaring atrium of floating cast medallion stairs. In the center of it lies the cast bronze Caryatid, circa 1870, attributed to French sculptor Louis-Félix Chabaud, who is renowned for his sculptures at the Louvre and the Palais Garnier opera house. An emblem of strength, grace and ingenuity, a harmony between art and engineering, it serves as a centerpiece and symbol of RH's desire to connect and create harmony between the brand and the people of Paris.

One of the first modern printings of "De Architectura, the Ten Books on Architecture" by Vitruvius, which was produced around 1521. Paul Fogiel/WWD

The dining section includes Le Petit RH, an upscale restaurant envisaged as a jewel box, featuring a menu of caviar specialties, small plates, signature salads and seafood towers. Clad with champagne lacquered walls with a sparkling ceiling of more than 7,000 individually handblown



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